THE CHRONICLE AND INDEX.

1885.

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

PURCHASED WITH THE INCOME OF THE FUND
GIVEN BY

FREDERICK MADGE
1820-1908

SON OF THE REV. THOS. MADGE, 1786-1870, OF
ESSEX STREET CHAPEL, LONDON, 1825-1859

C.12 v.5

The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

No. 49, Vol. v.] BELFAST, JANUARY 1st, 1885. [For Gratuitous Circulation

THE Rev. J. C. Street acknowledges, with thanks, the receipt of the following subscriptions in aid of the gratuitous publication and circulation of the *Chronicle and Index*:—W. A. Adamson, Carrickfergus, 2/6; J. Cooke, Guildford, England, 5/-; Mrs. Watson, Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 10/-.

At the commencement of the fifth volume of the *Chronicle and Index*, the assistance of all who are interested in its existence will be an encouragement. We hope to receive the substantial aid of many of our friends.

The following subjects have been brought by the Rev. J. C. Street before his Sunday evening congregations during the month of December:—

Dec. 7. A Lesson in Conciliation.
14. The Forerunner.
21. Ecce Homo!
28. The Dead and Living Past.

On Christmas day there was a special service suited for the day, and an appeal was made on behalf of the poor.

The Children's Services have been conducted as usual at Rosemary Street and Hopeton Street, the former by Mr. Darbishire and the Rev. J. C. Street, and the latter by the Rev. J. H. Bibby, of Ballee. In each case the children were greatly interested, and the service was very profitable.

Sunday, December 21st, was a great day in Moneyrea. The fine old meeting-house, which had been closed for repairs and renovation, was re-opened. The day was bright, and large numbers of friends in omnibuses, coaches, and vehicles of all descriptions, came from Belfast, Downpatrick, Comber, Rademon, Killinchy, Carrickfergus, Newtownards, and many other places, and at the time of service the spacious building was filled. Everything looked bright and cheerful. The building was transformed and glorified. The service was conducted by the Rev. J. C. Street, of Belfast, assisted by the new minister, the Rev. G. W. Bannister. Mr. Street's sermon on "The Growth of Religion in the World and the Soul" was heard with great attention, and the response to his appeal was very generous. The noble sum of £132 8s 6d was contributed. When the service was over, the friends lingered about the grounds, surveying the buildings, and partaking the hospitality of the congregation in the schoolroom, and every one seemed to feel a bright and promising future was opening out before the famous old congregation of Moneyrea.

We learn with great satisfaction that the Rev. A. H. Shelley, of Yarmouth, the son of one of our earnest and faithful English ministers, who died in the midst of his useful career, has accepted the call of the Templepatrick congregation, and was ordained to his charge on December 26th. Mr. Shelley has received his training at Caermarthan and Oxford, and promises to be a worthy inheritor of his father's name and zeal. We hope he will have a happy and useful career.

On Monday evening, December 8th, the proceedings at the meeting of the Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association were agreeably varied by the reading of four short papers:—

"The Church and the Stage." Mr. S. Millin.

"A Plea for the Past." Miss H. B. Aston.
"Is there a Future State?" Mr. C. J. Knox.
"The Millenium." Anonymous.

The papers were criticised by Messrs. O'Connor, Robb, Roche, Cuming, and the President.

The following Monday evening the Rev. J. A. Kelly, Rademon, delivered a lecture on music, in which he referred to the great influence music has in elevating the thought and aspirations of humanity, and commented strongly on the desirability of making its influence as wide-spread as possible.

Last Monday evening, December 22nd, a paper on "Political Reform" was read by Mr. Johnston: the paper gave rise to a good deal of criticism, to which Mr. Johnston made an admirable reply.

The first half of the present session is now over, and on looking back at its close, the members and friends of the Association must feel that during its course they have spent many pleasant and profitable evenings together, and that the discussions of the various subjects brought before them has been an excellent training for the weightier affairs of life. The Association has always kept its high aims in view, and has been, so far, successful in its strivings. The programme for the remainder of the session gives abundant promise of being as fruitful as its predecessor.

In connection with the Scottish Lectureship, the Sunday work of the Rev. Christopher J. Street, M.A., since Paisley and Kilbarchan were handed over to the Rev. J. E. Stronge, has been carried on at Perth and South St. Mungo Street Church, Glasgow. The cause at Perth was almost defunct because of a misunderstanding between the local friends and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association; but the latter Association having handed all the responsibilities over to the Scottish Unitarian Association, Mr. Street was able to bring about a better state of feeling, and four Sunday's work brought up the attendance at the services from *seven* to forty-six. Since then the services have been conducted by lay preachers, except on one Sunday when Mr. Street visited Perth again and preached to a satisfactory congregation. There seems no prospect of doing more at Perth than maintaining a regular service for a faithful few; but it is highly desirable that no nucleus of Unitarian influence, however small, should be allowed to collapse. Mr. Street will conduct the services at Perth during January and February, and it is hoped that this effort will lead to a further revival of interest. The East End Glasgow Church asked the favour of Mr. Street's services for a month, previous to the settlement of the newly-appointed minister, Rev. Joseph Taylor: the request was readily acceded to, and the result was satisfactory to everyone. Mr. Taylor has entered upon the charge of a united congregation, who offer him every encouragement and give promise of co-operation and sympathy in his work. We heartily wish him a useful and happy ministry. Mr. Street has given four week-night lectures in the South St. Mungo Street Church to fair and interested audiences. The questions asked showed that thought had been stimulated in those who were present. The week-evening lectures have been numerous and well attended, and Mr. Stronge's work at Paisley and Kilbarchan has been energetically prosecuted.

CHARGE TO REV. JOSEPH H. BIBBY ON HIS SETTLEMENT AS MINISTER AT BALLEE, ON WEDNESDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 1884.

BY THE REV. J. C. STREET.

MY BROTHER,

It is at your request that I stand here to offer to you a few words of counsel on this great day of your life-history. You might have chosen from among your English friends one who could have spoken with more weight, and with greater amplitude of knowledge and experience than myself, but you could hardly have chosen one who is more deeply interested in your welfare or more desirous of seeing you enter well-equipped for your solemn duties. I respond readily to your call, and I shall venture to speak my few words to you the more plainly and pointedly because I know that as a true and earnest man you will give them

due heed, and construe them as the faithful words of a faithful friend.

Not as a stranger to a stranger do I address myself to you, my brother, to day: but as a friend to a friend, a brother to a brother. At various points in your personal history I have had the opportunity of meeting and knowing you, while of late, it has been my pleasure to see and know a great deal of you in the confidences and intimacies of private life. We have exchanged thoughts and feelings, we have talked of men and books, and we have confided to each other aims, hopes and purposes. So that I address myself to a man whom I know, and whose mind and heart will respond to my words.

You have soberly and deliberately chosen your life-work, and enter upon your office as a minister of religion, impressed with the greatness of the function, and the arduousness of the labour attached to such a ministry. You are giving yourself up to the service of man, which is also the service of God, and you are naturally feeling how solemn and important is this day of your consecration to the work of your choice. I can feel with you to day, and sympathise with those deep and complex emotions which are filling your heart. You are on the threshold of unknown regions, and are immediately to take a step into the solemn infinitude about you, and you are naturally putting to yourself many a testing question as to your fitness to bear the great responsibilities which are sure to be laid upon you.

You will bear with me, then, if I recall to your mind, and urge upon you with affectionate earnestness, some of the trusts and responsibilities which are committed to you.

In the first place you are, as minister of the church of this place, to be its *preacher* and *prophet*. The people who gather together week by week to listen to you will look to you to speak of the loftiest themes and the noblest duties. They will want to know how to reconcile the daily round of life's needful toil and strife with the grand aims and principles of pure and undefiled religion. They will want light, comfort, strength, peace, and inspiration, that they may be able to do and bear greatly the common things of life. To you will they turn. Now, my brother, what will you preach? What will you prophecy to them? You will not content yourself with preaching creeds and doctrines. You will not try to satisfy your people's hunger by giving them the dry husks of theology. You will not feel it necessary to be endlessly repeating old saws and ancient maxims. You will feel that your first duty is to give to your people the very best and noblest thought you have. Sitting at the feet of the divinest teachers yourself, and drinking from God's eternal fountains the living waters of inspiration, you will pour out into the thirsty souls of your people streams of life by which they may be refreshed and purified. You must not, you will not, content yourself with gaining experience and inspiration from the divinely illumined past; you must not be familiar with only one literature, and the revelations of God to only one people; you will not limit yourself to only one among the great teachers that, at successive times, God has sent forth to enlighten and inspire His people; but you will look for God everywhere; yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow; you will find Him in all things; in law, in order, in men, in books, in nature and in grace; you will hear His voice, as the deep under-tone, amid all the languages and dialects of past ages and races, and it will speak to you through the mouths of all people in "the living present." Not only in the deeds and thoughts of ancient Jews and early Christians, but in the deeds and thoughts of all men; in to-day's business, and politics, and pleasures, as well as in the upward climbing of the past, will you find God, and Revelation, and Holy Gospel. From all sides and sources, as from the all-sidedness of God, will you draw illustration, parable, precept, and example. But, my brother, you must not, and you never will, forget that you are by choice, by conviction, and by gladdest necessity a ~~Christian~~ minister, and that while you have found God everywhere, and in everything, yet do you find Him most chiefly in the exalted life and inspiring teachings of "the man of Nazareth," who, according to one testimony, since ratified by

the franchises of unnumbered millions, "spake as never man spake." You will keep him ever before you, you will preach him to your people, you will interpret and enforce those principles in the grand religion which he taught and lived among men, which are eternal, immutable, and universal. Not from any slavish bondage will you do this, but because these principles approve themselves to your reason, your conscience, and your soul. For you must, above and before all things, be true to yourself. Your nature must be genuine, and you must give forth unsullied that which God makes known to you. Jesus did not want slavish echoes, but free and honest interpreters. Your business will be to teach and preach that which is to you true, divine, and God-like. You will do this simply and honestly—not deterred by the fear of men, and not lured away by their smiles. Thus, as preacher and prophet in this church, will you, like your greatest Teacher, Christ, strive to build up the lives of your flock into the loftiest excellence. Upward, toward God; and outward, toward humanity, will you and they grow.

In the next place, you are to be the *pastor* and *overseer* of the flock here.

It is not possible to over-estimate the influence and value of a pastor's office. He sees his people in their homes, and, amid the every-day affairs of life, becomes familiar with their characters and aims, learn what are their joys and sorrows, shares in their troubles and delights, and thus is able to bring to bear upon the individual soul the nutriment and strength it needs. This gives him a position of genuine influence and power. The lofty thoughts proclaimed in the public service are interpreted amid the quiet duties of the daily life. The lessons of heaven are translated into the vernacular of earth. From the heights of a religious manhood, the fresh breezes of a noble life are brought amid the feverish cares and anxieties of the daily toil and strife. The pastor is enabled to become the tried and trusted friend of each member of his flock, and can speak from his great vantage ground with ever-growing power. You, my brother, will not overlook or neglect the function of the pastor. You will guard yourself against letting this function attain preponderating proportions, for you must always be a *student* and a *thinker*, or you will be unable to do your loftiest work as *preacher* and *prophet*; but when you have done full justice to your intellect, you will give what time and strength you can spare to the inner home-life of your people, that you may be a welcome and honoured guest by every fire-side; a comforter, a counsellor, and a friend to each and all. In this way you will command the respect and esteem of all, and lay, broad and deep, the foundations of that affection and love which will draw the young people under your influence, and enable you to lead them up to God. Thus, in the home-life of his people, does the true pastor lay the foundations of a great Church, where pure love, and reverent worship, and divine service bring forth their sweetest flowers and fruits. I commend this great function of pastor and overseer to your serious thought.

But, my brother, it will neither be by preaching nor by visiting that you will be able to do the greatest work. Your life must be nobler than your sermons, and your example loftier than your precepts. Many a time do I rejoice that men and women are now beginning to find the credentials of the preacher, not in his apostolic descent, or ecclesiastical ordination, but in his daily life among them. Words are interpreted by deeds. He who speaks nobly, and lives greatly, is the most persuasive of preachers. When his inspiring utterances are illuminated by glorious actions, he becomes a "living epistle, read and known by all." You, my dear brother, know all this as well as I, and you are not likely to forget it in your ministry here. You will preach the loftiest thought you can reach. You will interpret, with the greatest power at your command, all the truths you know or can learn. You will sit at the feet of the great ones of the earth, who are taught of God, and you will impart to your people that which you yourself have learned; but mostly you will strive to keep your own nature so pure, and chaste, and transparent that the white light of God's truth and holiness shall pass through you undimmed

into the hearts and consciences of your people. While you speak to them of progress, and tell them ever to be looking forwards and seeking for "more light," you will be most careful to be progressive in your own life, and to "let your light so shine before men that others, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven." You yourself will be a gospel and epistle, a living exemplification of the ennobling doctrines you preach. So your message of truth, enlightened and illustrated by your daily life, will win its widening way and irradiate the lives of those who gather about your ministry.

I charge you, then, my brother, that in this ennobling ministry you stand forth as true *prophet*, *pastor*, and *example*. "Watch, thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." You have undertaken a great trust—with the true chivalry of a follower and interpreter of Jesus, you have followed Paul's example and obeyed the call, "come over and help us." Sacrificing personal gain, and sinking all natural ambitions, you have responded to the call of this church, and have this day assumed its oversight and ministry. You will find many a difficulty in your way. Thorns as well as flowers will be strewn upon your path. You will sometimes grow faint-hearted and sad, tempted to cry out, "O Lord, I have laboured in vain." But know this: that in God's universe no true labour is vain, and no brave work is done without yielding adequate return. Rest assured that your fidelity, your earnestness, your self-sacrifice, your patience, and your faith will find their true reward. As you lift upwards the trust and hope of your people, they will see more clearly into the ways of God, and where they cannot "see" they will trust. They will not grieve for their friends as if there were no better future *yonder*, nor for themselves as if there were no better *here* but they will trust God for the future, and serve him more nobly in the present, and so attain the end of faith. Enter, then, upon this noble work with a lofty courage and a quickening faith. Be resolute, be valiant, be patient, be prayerful. If you sow in tears you shall reap in joy. If you have hard rocks of sin to pierce you shall have as a reward the golden ore of righteousness. Let the grandest ideals stand before you! Keep the noble souls of the world, like a great gallery of pictures, in the chamber of your heart, and let the Great Teacher stand in the midst, as a perpetual inspiration and a divine incentive. In this spirit, and with these aims, fulfil your ministry, and many shall hereafter call this a blessed day, and your crown of rejoicing shall sparkle with the glad gratitude of many souls.

I have only one other word to add. In the course of your studies, and through your contact with great thinkers, you will find that your opinions will undergo many changes, and that your outlook into God's open universe will be from a frequently changing standpoint. Do not be alarmed at this, and do not be afraid to give your thoughts words. Speak out like a brave man and a true prophet that which you see. There are quite enough of repeaters and echoes in the world. Be you a true interpreter of such revelations as God shall make known to you. Do not let the fear of man hinder your fidelity. Let men say that you at least are bold, honest, and fearless; that you do not play tricks with words and thoughts, but use them to set forth what your intellect sees, and your heart feels. In this way you will become a true prophet, and a minister of that universal religion which, using many dialects, still speaks the language of the universal heart and soul. Brother, I commend you to God!

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE.

ON Thursday evening, December 11th, a largely-attended and very successful conference on Sunday School work, with special reference to the best mode of dealing with the elder scholars, was held in Mountpottinger Church. Amongst those who were present were—Rev. J. C. Street, Rev. W. Reynolds, Rev. J. Cooper, Rev. J. H. Bibby, Rev. A. Lancaster, Rev. Thos. Dunkerley, Comber; Rev. J. A. Kelly, Rademon; Rev. G. W. Bannister, Moneyrea; Messrs J. M. Darbishire, Robert M'Calmont, W. Napier, D. Bulmer, J. Scott, W. L. Scott, J.

K. Stewart, J. M'Williams, J. Worthington, S. H. Street, &c.

The proceedings commenced with tea, which was served in admirable style.

Mr. J. M. Darbishire was then called to the chair. He expressed his satisfaction at having been called on to take part in another conference on Sunday School work. He had no doubt that a great deal of instruction would be imparted in the course of their proceedings. The large number of representatives of their Church in attendance showed how earnestly united they were in efforts to do what they could for their Church and for one another. (Hear, hear.)

Rev. J. C. Street introduced the subject for discussion by an address on "The Problem of the Elder Scholars." Whether the title of his address was grammatical or not, it conveyed to the mind a distinct idea that Sunday Schools in the United Kingdom had to deal with one and the same problem, namely, how to interest and retain their elder scholars.

In England the schools were mostly missionary institutions, in which children not identified with any of the Churches, but gathered from the great mass of the people, were instructed. Through the instrumentality of the children thus taught many very happy results in connection with their Christian organisations were achieved. In Scotland the Sunday School was more intimately associated with the Church, though in great centres like Glasgow there were numerous Mission Schools. But in Ireland the union of the Sunday School with the Churches was still more complete.

The problem in England was how to keep hold of the elder scholars when they were beyond the years at which they were easily retained in Sunday School connection. Only a small percentage entered the Church; the majority lapsed. That difficulty was not quite so great in Scotland, where there was thorough grounding of the children in what was called religion. In the day schools, where the children of the nation went, the elements of the Shorter Catechism were taught, so that when those young fledglings came into the Sunday School they were juvenile graduates in theology. Their intellects were thus trained to familiarity with some of the most abstruse questions in theology. They were drilled in day schools and in their homes in Calvinistic theology, and if the Sunday School teacher were not a wise man he would go on with that drilling, and he would drive the tenets of the Shorter Catechism more and more into the intellects, and, if he could, into the natures of the children, making as a rule a number of half-educated, wholly spiritually-untrained men and women, who, confounding articles and dogmas with spiritual life, would fail to grapple with the essence of religion, which was love, and without which all theology was a failure. In Scotland the problem was not how to make the children theologians, but how to make them religious men and women, capable of taking up the duties and work of life, and able to bring a sanctified influence to bear upon all they touched. The Scotch were an earnest people, and when they entered into the spirit of religion as eagerly as they now grappled with dogmatic problems they would lead the world in holiness. In Ireland the Sunday School was mainly composed of the children who were brought up within the churches; and their schools were singularly interesting, because they brought together the children of the rich and of the poor, thus forming preliminary churches, and fitting them to take an active part in the work and worship of their Church organisations when they grew up to be men and women. More of the elder scholars in this country graduated into the churches because the tie between the two was more living and real. But even here there was a gulf that needed to be bridged. He would advocate the keeping of a church roll on which all young people could voluntarily sign their names, not necessarily as seat-holders or as stipend-payers, but as distinctly affiliating themselves with the congregation, so that a relationship might thus grow up between them and their minister. This would be a voluntary identification with the spiritual life of the Church. Out of it would grow all helpfulness in church work and life. He also, without advocating any special form of service, would have some form of initiation by which the entrance of the young

people into the Church should be marked; and he would assign to each some post of duty according to his tastes and powers. He threw out these hints with a view of leading up to a profitable discussion.

A very interesting discussion ensued. The Rev. J. A. Kelly told how the plans suggested by the essayist were actually put into operation by himself at Rademon, and gave interesting information as to their success. Their initiatory rite was the communion service, and he got the elders and committee of the congregation to join him in welcoming the young people.

The Rev. J. H. Bibby said that good teachers meant successful schools, and the solution of the elder scholar problem. He advocated the formation of social and religious guilds, the cultivation of the spirit of prayer, the thorough preparation for all class-work, and the development of the spirit of helpfulness among the elder scholars.

Mr. M'Calmont said that our percentage of the retention of elder scholars was greater than that of other churches, but that it still needed raising. He agreed with the essayist's suggestions, but added many others, such as classes of various kinds, bonds of union, &c.

The Rev. A. Lancaster emphasized the immense importance of home influences and contended that they were even more influential than schools or churches in the development of the higher life.

Mr. M'Williams gave an interesting account of the school work at Mountpottinger, and advocated fidelity, regularity, and earnestness among the teachers.

Mr. Bulmer gave encouraging facts regarding Hopeton Street; advocated the formation of teachers classes; and pleaded for help to carry on the work at the Mission Schools of Stanhope Street and Hopeton Street.

The Rev. G. W. Bannister spoke strongly about the value of personal influence, and dwelt upon the need of close relationship between teachers and scholars. There were divergent roads on the journey of life, where the wise counseller could guide the young into the path of safety.

The Rev. W. Reynolds spoke encouraging words, and showed how great was the influence of the Sunday School even upon those who were supposed to be lost to the Church. He approved of most of the suggestions made, but responded with all his heart to Mr. Bibby's suggestion that every class should commence its work with prayer. He advocated work and play, recreation and study, and thought there should be manifold agencies to interest and attract the scholars.

It was now late, and the proceedings of this most profitable evening were brought to a close by a vote of thanks to the Mountpottinger Congregation, for their hospitality, and to the Chairman for presiding. A recommendation was adopted that the next conference should take place at Rosemary Street, Belfast, and that the Rev. J. H. Bibby should be invited to read a paper. A hymn was sung, and Mr. Reynolds closed the meeting by pronouncing a benediction.

Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association.

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THIRTEENTH SESSION, 1884-85.

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PROGRAMME UNTIL END OF SESSION.

1885.

Jany. 5.—Lecture, "The Travels and Adventures of a Pretended Dervish. Rev. Thomas Dunkerley, B.A.
„ 12.—Paper, "Superstition and Prejudice." Mr. Max Veitel.
„ 19.—Music and Readings.
„ 26.—Paper, "Byron." Mr. W. J. Roche.
Feby. 2.—Paper, "Some Odd People and their Odd Sayings." Mr. H. Riddell, M.E.
„ 9.—Paper, "Men and Women as Political Factors." Mr. George Fisher.
„ 16.—Music and Readings.
„ 23.—Discussion, "The Redistribution Bill." Opened by Mr. F. D. F. O'Connor.
Mar. 2.—Paper, "Notes on a Voyage to South Africa." Mr. A. Millin.
„ 9.—Paper, "Spiritualism." Mr. A. W. Grant, S.S.C., Glasgow.
„ 16.—Music and Readings.
„ 23.—Miscellaneous (Original) Compositions. Members and Friends.
„ 30.—Lecture, "Keats." Rev. F. Thomas.
April 6.—Easter Monday—No Meeting.
„ 13.—Paper, "Modern Economic Legislation." Mr. Thomas Harrison, B.A.
„ 20.—Annual Business Meeting and Soiree.

The Annual Concert will be held during this portion of the Session as usual.

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THE OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

ARE

The intellectual and moral advancement of its members, and the furtherance of fellowship and acquaintance among them.

The Meetings are held on MONDAY EVENINGS at Eight o'clock, in the Rosemary Street Schools.

ADMISSION—To Lectures and Discussion. Members Free; Non-Members, Sixpence each. To Papers, and Music, and Readings—Free.

MEMBER'S SUBSCRIPTION.—4s. per annum, which entitles to the use of the Library. Subscriptions for the Thirteenth Session are now due and should be paid to the Treasurer, THOS. EDENS OSBORNE, at 14, Lombard Street, *as early as possible.*

BARRINGTON LECTURES ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.—These Lectures are being delivered under the auspices of the Association, as last year. The Lecturer for the present Session is Mr. W. A. Fitz-Henry, B.A. A nominal fee of 1s is charged for the course. For further particulars apply to the Secretaries.

The Librarian will be in attendance after service on Sunday Mornings, and on every Monday Evening during the Session.

HESTER B. ASTON, } Hon.
W. W. DRUMMOND, } Secs.

THE BELFAST UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

:o:

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:o:

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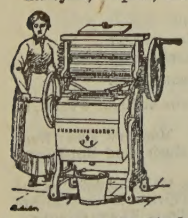

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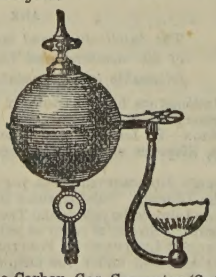

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